

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF RHODE ISLAND**

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND, et al.,

Plaintiffs,

v.

DONALD TRUMP, in his official capacity as
President of the United States; et al.,

Defendants.

Case No. 1:25-cv-128

SUPPLEMENTAL DECLARATION OF JENNIFER R. NELSON

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, I, Jennifer R. Nelson, hereby declare as follows:

1. I am a resident of New Jersey. I am over the age of 18 and have personal knowledge of all the facts stated herein, except as to those matters stated upon information and belief; as to those matters, I believe them to be true. If called as a witness, I could and would testify competently to the matters set forth below.

2. In February 2021, I was appointed as the State Librarian for the New Jersey State Library, an affiliate of Thomas Edison State University. Prior to holding this position, I served as director of Minnesota State Library Services, a division of the Minnesota Department of Education that administers state and federal programs for libraries and the Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library. In addition to state-level work, I also have more than 25 years of experience at large urban and county libraries.

3. The New Jersey State Library (NJSL) is responsible for maintaining library resources and information services over a broad range of subjects and for providing special library

services for the legislative, executive and judicial branches of state Government, supplemental library service for New Jersey libraries and direct library services for persons with disabilities. NJSL is also charged with coordinating a statewide system of libraries in New Jersey and administering State and federal programs for the development of libraries, library facilities, library resources and library services in New Jersey. NJSL requires reports that are necessary for the proper administration of its duties. This includes gathering and publishing annual and occasional statistics on libraries in the State.

4. As State Librarian, I am responsible for directing and administering the work of the New Jersey State Library and administering all laws which are included under the jurisdiction of the library, including the fiscal oversight and management of federal and State grant and aid programs. Further, I am certified by New Jersey's Legal Officer to assure and certify that the New Jersey State Library is a State Library Administrative Agency with the fiscal and legal authority and capability to administer all aspects of the Library Services and Technology subchapter 20 U.S.C. Chapter 72. Under my direction, NJSL establishes the State's policies, priorities, criteria, and procedures necessary to the implementation of all programs under this subchapter.

5. I previously provided a declaration in support of Plaintiffs' Temporary Restraining Order, which has since been converted to a Motion for Preliminary Injunction. I provide this supplemental declaration in support of that Motion.

6. On April 9, 2025, at 10:16 PM, I received an email from grantsadmin@imls.gov notifying me that IMLS would be terminating Grant Application No. LG-255048-OLS-23 effective April 8, 2025. The email contained an Action Memorandum and Notice of Grant Termination, both of which are submitted as Exhibit A to this supplemental declaration.

7. The terminated grant amounted to \$748,588 in discretionary funds, but to date only \$24,914 has been disbursed. The NJSL relies upon these funds to carry out Teaching Information Literacy, a project that is developing an instructional framework and educational activities that will be used by K-12 teachers and school librarians to teach K-12 students in New Jersey statutorily required information literacy skills. The project also calls for a National Forum (Reimagining Information Literacy) to be held in summer 2026. A significant portion (\$622,000) of the funds are being used for four primary projects: 1) developing the instructional framework and learning activities for each K-12 grade band; 2) creating evaluation tools for educators and students; 3) creating online interactive modules for professional development sessions on information literacy and developing in person training sessions, and; 4) planning a national event that will draw experts from across the United States to discuss information literacy and learn about New Jersey's new teaching model.

8. Without access to these funds, we will be unable to work on the project and have issued stop work orders to the consultants, advisory and working groups effective April 8, 2025. The primary consequence of the termination is that New Jersey K-12 teachers and librarians will not have specially designed tools and learning activities with which to teach to New Jersey's emerging information literacy skill standards. Each school district will need to create its own curriculum, which is a significant expense. The National Forum will have to be cancelled and preparations, including site selection, will have to be terminated. There will not be any online professional development modules for self-paced learning, and no in-person training sessions allowing teachers to learn together. The status of reimbursement requests is unclear; as a result, NJSL may need to identify sources of funding to meet our contractual obligations to these vendors. In addition, since the termination arrived after the business day had closed on April 9 but with the

termination effective April 8, NJSL is left to find resources to pay its consulting partners for work completed on April 9, 2025.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States that, to the best of my knowledge, the foregoing is true and correct. Executed on April 11, 2025, at Trenton, New Jersey.


JENNIFER R. NELSON

EXHIBIT A



**INSTITUTE OF MUSEUM AND LIBRARY SERVICES
ACTION MEMORANDUM**

April 8, 2025

FROM: Keith Sonderling, Acting Director

SUBJECT: Authorization for Termination of Grant(s)

Purpose:

This memorandum authorizes the termination of federal grants administered by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), effective April 8, 2025, in alignment with the agency's updated priorities and the President's Executive Order 14238, *Continuing the Reduction of the Federal Bureaucracy*, issued on March 14, 2025.

Action:

I hereby authorize the termination of the attached federal grant(s), effective April 8, 2025, pursuant to the terms in the attached exhibit(s).

Attachment:

See the attached *Exhibit Grant Notice* for the template of the individual grant termination notice to be issued to each of the grantees.

Contact:

Questions regarding this action may be directed to grant-notices@imls.gov.

Sincerely,

Keith Sonderling

Keith Sonderling

Acting Director

ksonderling@imls.gov

955 L'Enfant Plaza SW #4000, Washington, DC 20024

Attachment: Exhibit Grant Notice

**INSTITUTE OF MUSEUM AND LIBRARY SERVICES****NOTICE OF GRANT TERMINATION**

April 8, 2025

Sharon Rawlins, Maura Walsh, Jennifer Nelson

srawlins@njstatelib.org, mwalsh@njstatelib.org, jnelson@njstatelib.org

Dear IMLS Grantee,

This letter provides notice that the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is terminating your federal grant (Grant Application No. LG-255048-OLS-23) effective April 8, 2025, in accordance with the termination clause in your Award Agreement.

Upon further review, IMLS has determined that your grant is unfortunately no longer consistent with the agency's priorities and no longer serves the interest of the United States and the IMLS Program. IMLS is repurposing its funding allocations in a new direction in furtherance of the President's agenda. Independently and secondly, the President's March 14, 2025 executive order mandates that the IMLS eliminate all non-statutorily required activities and functions. *See Continuing the Reduction of the Federal Bureaucracy*, E.O. 14238 (Mar. 14, 2025). Therefore, the IMLS hereby terminates your grant in its entirety effective April 8, 2025.

Please remember that your obligations under the Grant Agreement continue to apply. An audit may be conducted by IMLS after the termination of the agreement.

Please contact grant-notice@imls.gov with only urgent questions. We wish you well.

Sincerely,

/s/ Keith Sonderling

Keith Sonderling

Acting Director

ksonderling@imls.gov

955 L'Enfant Plaza SW #4000, Washington, DC 20024